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ABSTRACT

This book reports on the School Development Program (SDP) designed by James Comer. Known also as the Comer program, this reform effort assists underachieving urban schools by analyzing the school as a system to better understand the complex interactions occurring within this system. Favoring a variety of pedagogical approaches, the SDP focuses on what is "best for the child." This book presents descriptive and interpretive case studies of five "Comer" schools. The studies describe how the SDP is defined, practiced, and related to the school's success. Following the studies is a cross-site analysis that compares and synthesizes the studies to determine what they reveal about the SDP and educational reform. The conclusion presents a graphic representation of how the SDP is embedded in and contributes to the success of the five subject schools. The research shows that, while a contributing factor, the SDP is not the sole agent in determining a school's success. The studies suggest that children from all income groups can gain the social and academic skills they need to do well in school and in life when the education system addresses their needs. (Contains an author index, a subject index, and 67 references.) (WFA)

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